CHAPTER 1

A Vision of the Future

An inherent tension exists in every transportation plan: It must map the future with broad, bold strokes, but it must temper investment opportunities with financial realities. Without a bold vision of the future, transportation will not attract the investment it requires to serve the needs of present and future generations. Without a disciplined investment strategy, resources will be wasted and additional funding denied. An effective plan requires both the broad vision and the disciplined investment strategy. The CMA's goal is to continue to chart the future boldly—while committing resources wisely.

BACKGROUND

A bold blueprint for countywide transportation investment is necessary because the money allocated to transportation continues to be insufficient to keep pace with the growth of population and employment—much less meet the needs of future generations.

- Oakland and the adjoining communities of northern Alameda County need transportation investment to serve the commute needs of a revitalized industrial zone, to realize global trading opportunities and to spur the revitalization of neighborhoods and industrial areas that are transitioning from one use to another.
- Hayward and the neighboring communities of Central County look to a future in which heavy traffic is a less invasive presence on city streets.
- Fremont and the adjoining communities of South County look to transportation investment for the opportunity to develop office and industrial parks and a high technology manufacturing base.
- In Livermore, Dublin and Pleasanton, transportation investment presents an opportunity to develop communities with the jobs and tax base to support high-quality schools and public services.

The investment program must be tailored to fit the diverse needs of the communities and match local conditions. It must continue to consider maintenance and management of the system as high priorities.

Throughout Alameda County, topography and existing development limit the CMA's ability to build new transportation facilities. The Plan must ensure the safe and efficient operation of existing facilities. Meeting the diverse transportation needs of the County poses four challenges for transportation planning.

- To articulate the vision of a transportation system that will meet present needs and those of future generations.
- To make the strategic choices necessary to achieve the vision and lay the groundwork for a long-range investment program, including specific investments that are most immediately necessary to enhance the County's quality of life, its prospects for economic growth and its standing in the global economy.
- To identify and secure enough funds to implement the *Countywide Transportation Plan*.
- To establish policy guidelines for the maintenance, pricing and operation of the transportation system—including its coordination with land use planning—in order to ensure that investment in the system results in efficient and productive operation.

A VISION OF FUTURE TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

Developing a transportation system is an enterprise that continues from generation to generation. The region has enjoyed a modern transportation system because each generation has invested in the future of the next. This was the logic that implemented BART, AC Transit's Transbay Service and the region's freeway system. The CMA's vision of future transportation needs is based on five fundamental principles.

- Leave the next generation with a transportation system that creates economic opportunities, not economic burdens, and to not leave a legacy of poorly maintained facilities, underfunded services and unsettled debts.
- Reflect the County's racial, ethnic, social, economic, environmental and geographic diversity.
- Design the transportation system to accommodate future growth so the next generation will have the job opportunities, the employment choices and the housing options it deserves.
- Recognize that both suburban development and urban redevelopment will be necessary to accommodate the level of population and employment growth projected for the County, and to provide the next generation with choices of where to live and work.
- Ensure that transportation improvements are coupled with a commitment to conserve resources and preserve Alameda County's environment.

The vision of an effective transportation system includes complementary improvements in all forms of transportation, coordinated through cooperative planning. Planning for major projects would be closely coordinated with planning for community development and environmental conservation.

With coordinated planning of transportation and land use, selective restoration of bus/transit service (called bus rapid transit, BRT) that emulates historical East Bay streetcar and trolley service (or a functionally equivalent bus system alternative) would be used to reinforce efforts to renew and reinvigorate urban neighborhoods. BART termini would be located for convenient access from the

freeway system and convenient connections with interregional rail lines. BART stations would be designed for efficient coordination of bus and rail service. Intercity bus service would be provided where rail transit is less economical or less feasible due to rail funding delays. Bus service would be scheduled for convenient rail connections. Transit "hubs" would serve as nuclei for development and redevelopment.

The freeway system would be designed and operated to shelter local communities from the unwanted intrusion of traffic flowing through neighborhoods and districts. Increasing emphasis would be placed on the system's ability to keep buses and carpools moving during peak commute hours.

Operating policies would change to meet specific needs during peak and off-peak hours. During peak commute hours, priority would be given to commute service—employing high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes and express bus service to speed commuters to work. During midday hours, HOV lanes would be opened for general traffic service, providing that increment of highway space essential for efficient trucking operations.

Freight terminal gate hours at the Port of Oakland would be extended to allow trucks to schedule pickups and deliveries before the a.m. peak period and after the p.m. peak period on the region's highways and roads. This would reduce congestion and improve safety by spreading truck traffic over longer periods of time.

GOALS AND PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

The CMA desired outcome is a balanced transportation system with modern and well-maintained facilities—a system that:

- Provides safe and convenient access to jobs and services;
- Ensures the efficient movement of freight; and
- Contributes to the conservation of natural resources and the preservation of environmental heritage for the use of future generations.

CMA goals and performance objectives are organized into six areas:

- Improve Mobility
- Increase Transit Access and Transit Use
- Improve Air Quality and Reduce Greenhouse Gases
- Enhance Economic Vitality

- Enhance Operational Efficiency
- Coordinate Transportation and Land Use Planning

Improve Mobility

Congestion is a fact of life in metropolitan areas around the world. A transportation system cannot be expected to banish all congestion. Pricing and investment can be employed to reduce and limit congestion—thus improving or sustaining mobility.

Performance objectives for sustained mobility and reduced congestion are:

- A transportation system that continues to serve commuters safely and conveniently without excessive delays.
- A transportation system that accommodates shipping and distribution requirements reliably and economically.
- A highway system that moves traffic safely, swiftly and reliably during most hours of the day.

Increase Transit Access and Transit Use

Transit access is essential for the economic health of the urban core and for the mobility of those who are unable to afford or use an automobile. Increased use of shared transportation, including transit, vanpools and carpools, is necessary to conserve energy, relieve congestion and improve air quality.

Performance objectives for transit and other forms of shared transportation are:

- A level of service that provides congested corridors and major activity centers with a high-quality commute alternative which is not overcrowded and therefore unattractive.
- A system that provides dependable countywide access for those unable to drive.
- Improvement in transit and carpool travel time that makes transit and ridesharing the most desirable transportation options for a growing proportion of the countywide workforce.

Improve Air Quality and Reduce Greenhouse Gases

Cars and trucks are a primary source of pollution in the Bay Area. Automotive-emissions control and the gradual replacement of old cars that lack state-of-the-art controls have made a significant contribution to clean air. Continuing progress toward clean air will require continuing technological improvement. But given the expected rate of population growth, trip reduction by automobile is critical to maintain clean air, and reduce greenhouse gases.

Performance objectives for technological improvement are:

- Steady progress toward retiring older vehicles and expanding the use of zero-emission or "clean" vehicles so the Bay Area can avoid transportation control measures—mandated curbs on polluting behavior—since such regulation may cause personal hardship or the flight of business.
- Encourage the purchase of alternative fuel transit vehicles to the greatest extent possible given financial constraints.

Performance objectives for reducing trips are:

- A transportation system that enables and encourages an increased share of commute trips to be made by commuter rail, mass transit, carpool, vanpool, walking or bicycle.
- HOV lane use that maximizes the efficiency of the transportation system through carpools, transit or other uses.
- Increased opportunity to work at home or to telecommute.
- Strategies that reduce transportation's share of greenhouse gas emissions.

Enhance Economic Vitality

Alameda County is a global gateway for freight movement and a center for warehousing and distribution. Trucking plays a larger role in the economy than that of any other Bay Area county.

Performance objectives for freight movement are:

- A transportation system which provides reliable and economical service for shippers considering a Bay Area or West Coast location.
- A highway system which provides the high-quality, high-reliability service required by companies engaged in high-value and/or just-in-time manufacturing.
- Intermodal connections—linking sea shipping and rail, for instance—that allow the Port of Oakland to compete effectively for discretionary cargo.

Enhance Operational Efficiency

Management, maintenance and operations are the day-to-day backbone of an economical and reliable transportation system. Transit service depends on efficient operations, while maintenance and rehabilitation are essential for the longevity of local roads and transit facilities. Demand for use of the freeway and arterial system is greater than existing facilities can accommodate. In many parts of the County, increasing capacity—the number of people a road or transit service can hold—by widening the roadways may not be possible because of geographical limitations and/or lack of funding.

Performance objectives for managing the system are:

- Apply ramp metering, where appropriate, through cooperative agreements between local jurisdictions and Caltrans.
- Include, where feasible, HOV bypass lanes as a part of a ramp metering program.
- Develop a system of park-and-ride lots throughout the County to increase use of HOV lanes.
- Implement high occupancy toll (HOT) lanes in combination with HOV lanes to maximize use of the carpool lanes.

We need to increase capacity by using the existing system more efficiently—making the most of what we have.

Performance objective for street maintenance is:

- Safe and economical streets because they have been maintained and rehabilitated, on a timely schedule.

Performance objective for both street rehabilitation and transit vehicle replacement is:

- Funding arrangements that do not burden future generations by deferring expenses.

Performance objectives for transit maintenance and operations are:

- Operations that are reliable and dependable because maintenance is performed when needed and not later.
- Accurately anticipate when vehicles will need to be replaced.
- Enough money to operate the system.

Coordinate Transportation and Land Use Planning

Highway investment can support orderly growth and development—or generate speculative pressures that disrupt orderly development. Rail transit can provide an efficient way to move large passenger volumes—or it can prove a costly way to move a small number of people. In each case, a positive outcome hinges on an effective, cooperative approach to coordinating transportation and land use planning.

Performance objectives for coordinating transportation and land use planning are:

- A cooperative process which engages local government in planning for "corridor management" of the transportation system.
- A process which ensures mutually agreeable and reasonable correspondence between planned development, transportation improvements and required actions to mitigate negative consequences.

Broad principles that form the basis for coordinating transportation and land use, including goals and criteria for implementing transit-oriented development (TOD) are included in Chapter 4. In addition, specific objectives are outlined in the context of corridor management planning in which local governments are active partners.

PLANNING AGENDA

Table 1.1 translates the CMA's goals and performance expectations into an agenda for planning. It reiterates policy goals, specifies the functions required of each part of the transportation system and identifies key action priorities. This agenda serves as a frame of reference for identifying long-term investment needs and as a compass for strategic choices about the future improvement of the countywide transportation system.

Table 1.1—Goals, Requirements and Key Priorities

POLICY GOALS	FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS	KEY PRIORITIES
Improve Mobility	A balanced transportation system that employs a continuous network of freeways, parkways, major arterials, transit services, bicycle and pedestrian facilities to move people and goods as efficiently as possible.	A reliable and flexible source of funding for street, highway and transit improvements.
Increase Transit Access and Transit Use	A service-oriented transit system that provides frequent, convenient and reliable service to the major activity centers in each of the County's major transportation corridors.	A reliable source of funding for transit investment and operations.

POLICY GOALS	FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS	KEY PRIORITIES
Improve Air Quality and Reduce Greenhouse Gases	A transportation system that rewards those who share rides, telecommute, use transit, walk or bicycle; adopt a policy encouraging the use of zero-emission vehicles, and/or encourage the use of traffic signals, road lighting systems, and transit equipment and facilities that reduce energy consumption.	Incentives for telecommuting, ridesharing, transit use, walking, bicycling, the use of LED lighting and LEED certified transportation improvements, and the early retirement of high-emission vehicles.
Enhance Economic Vitality	A transportation system that is designed to expedite the movement of urban goods and global freight.	Operating, maintenance and investment policies which ensure the efficiency of freight movement is not impaired by midday congestion and maintain an infrastructure capable of handling freight vehicles.
Enhance Operational Efficiency	A transportation system in which the maintenance shortfall for local streets and roads and transit capital costs is fully funded.	Reliable source of funds and timetable for eliminating the deferred maintenance of local streets and transit systems.
Coordinate Transportation and Land Use Planning	A transportation system that supports orderly growth and counterpart land use policies that enable the efficient provision of transportation.	Creating an effective partnership that involves local governments as full partners in corridor management planning. Application of criteria for implementation of TOD to increase transit use and efficiency.

AVAILABLE RESOURCES VERSUS PRESENT AND FUTURE NEEDS

The money currently available for transportation—or lack thereof—will not allow Alameda County to create the transportation system envisioned above. There is a particularly wide gap between what exists

and what is needed for transit operations, street maintenance and major new capital improvements. This revenue gap presents difficult choices: The CMA can:

- Avoid present expenses by letting the next generation pick up much of our tab through deferred payment;
- Conserve resources by estimating the cost of projects conservatively;
- Manage demand through pricing, land use management or metered highway operation; or
- Seek additional revenues to finance additional investment.

The course of action proposed is an investment strategy that honors the obligation to future generations, while taking a combination of other steps necessary to:

- Ensure that funds needed to maintain and operate existing facilities are not diverted to build new facilities;
- Ensure that no individual project is so costly that it compromises improvement of the system as a whole;
- Ensure that regional gateways are safely operated in a manner which manages traffic flow and, where appropriate, provides priority for the movement of buses, carpools and commercial vehicles;
- Give priority to those projects that are included in a cooperative corridor/area management plan;
- Implement incentives for transit use, telecommuting, ride sharing and more efficient use of existing road space;
- Secure additional funding for an investment program that serves priority needs as economically as possible; and
- Maximize the efficiency of the existing transportation system through pricing.

The recommended approach is workable and requires strategic choices necessary to develop a cost-effective investment program.

RECONCILING LIMITED RESOURCES AND CRITICAL NEEDS

The CMA can reconcile limited resources and critical needs by making strategic decisions about the investments most needed, investments that are affordable and how to reconcile the differences. Making strategic investment choices on a multimodal, systemwide basis is an important role for cities and counties—a role that was long suppressed by the inflexibility of state and federal funding arrangements.

The extension of Alameda County's half-cent transportation sales tax and state legislation, such as state Senate Bill 45 (Kopp, statutes of 1997), have opened the door to strategic decision-making by local transportation agencies. Reauthorization of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation

Equity Act (SAFETEA-LU) will present another opportunity to further this flexibility. With flexible funding and local funding sources, countywide transportation planning now allows and requires critical choices and strategic decisionmaking.

Below is an outline of the 10 most critical transportation choices continuing to face Alameda County. These choices can be characterized as strategic ones because their outcomes will determine how well the countywide transportation system works and how effectively it can serve the needs of future generations. There is no one right answer when considering the 10 strategic choices. This Plan constitutes a framework for making these critical decisions. A chapter reference for each question is indicated to guide the reader.

1. How much funding should be guaranteed to operate and maintain existing facilities and services versus that committed to capital investment in new facilities? (Chapters 2 and 4)
2. Should the CMA's investment program emphasize transit improvement or highway improvement? Or should it emphasize street, highway and transit improvements where each is most appropriate? (Chapter 3)
3. Should transit improvement emphasize the improvement of existing bus service and expanded services that emulate rail and/or electric trolley service in the County where feasible? Or should it emphasize the development of long-distance rail and bus service? (Chapter 3)
4. How can the service provided by BART, buses, light rail and interregional rail be coordinated most effectively and expanded most efficiently? (Chapter 4)
5. How can the freeway system be operated more efficiently without burdening major local roads with additional congestion and heavy traffic? What are the respective roles of ramp metering and HOV lanes in the County's primary freeway corridors? (Chapter 4)
6. How can transportation investment decisions be coupled more effectively with planning for economic growth and community development? (Chapter 4)
7. How can the movement of passengers and freight be reconciled most effectively? What investments are specifically needed for efficient goods movement? (Chapter 4)
8. What pricing measures would be most productive in improving air quality, reducing greenhouse gases and reducing congestion—and which of these would be most acceptable to the public? (Chapter 4)
9. How much additional revenue is necessary to meet the County's transportation needs and how much are its residents prepared to pay? (Chapter 5)
10. What revenue contribution should be sought from fuel taxes, sales taxes, bridge and highway tolls and development impact fees? (Chapter 5)

This Plan will have served its purpose if it provides a framework for making these choices on a cooperative, multi-agency basis that is determined first and foremost by the common good and the needs of the next generation. Achieving this goal is the work before the CMA.